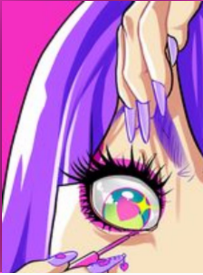




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Where in the World is Melanie_Marie_78?



👁 423 ✓ 41 ★ 42

Chapter 1 by SaintSayaka

You know, this all started as a joke. My friend told me to put on some fake eyelashes, and I did. Then I moved on to dresses. Then nail polish. One Ninstagram account later, and every teenage girl in America is hounding after me. Nobody knows where I live, but they've tried their best to figure it out - they deconstruct the backgrounds in my photos, hack into my accounts, trace my ISP. Everybody wants to know where MelanieMarie78 lives, the titular fashion queen of Ninstagram.

If only they knew I was a boy.

Chapter 2 by R



They try to track my purchases, but the jokes on them because all of the clothing is either old, borrowed, or hand made. The make-up all comes from either my mom or my best friend - stolen from my mother, given freely by my friend.

Like I said, it started as a joke. It wasn't like I was super in to dressing like a girl, but it gave me some escapism, let me become someone who I wasn't so I could avoid all of my issues in real life.

Plus, I really liked the fame. And the money. That stuff was addicting.

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It was Ami who had started it all. I first wanted her to take it down, but then all the other people in my life people actually liked me.

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Still, there was one downside to my fame - the creepers. None of them had figured out where I lived, but it was only a matter of time. No one in town was creepy, though I did have fans, but some people had shown up out of the blue, asking around for a Melanie Marie. Some of the girls in my school had pretended, but they'd gotten shot down very quickly.

No one suspected me, yet.

But I was starting to worry what was going to happen if, or really when, they did.

Chapter 3 by Nyapollo



In the movies and stuff, everyone always finds out the hero's big secret after one mistake, just one slip-up; leaving part of the costume on, or whatnot. Or, if it's one of those soapy dramas (which, despite my new persona, I still hate), then the cheaters will come out of a room wearing each other's clothes, or something.

Not me, though. Ami and I were careful to only do my, uh, "photoshoots" in total privacy. I never held onto anything; Ami would carry all of the clothes and products from my house to hers in a big bag, so as not to be seen.

And for a while, things were fine.

Maybe you know a little of what it's like, to find a better version of you. I didn't want to stop. In real life, I was Garth the loser, head stuffed with too many geeky interests, grades plummeting from not paying attention, parents fighting. But on Ninstagram, it all went away.

I never commented back to anyone. What would I say? I wasn't good enough to construct an entire personality, and neither was Ami. Despite that, just seeing the praise was enough to make my day. "You look like a supermodel!" "So beautiful!" "I want fashion tips!"

I didn't let it go to my head. Ami and I didn't openly discuss things. We just enjoyed ourselves.

Then the posters started going up around school. They, they were trying to make a "Find Melanie Marie Club"? And rumors were flying. I heard my teachers even mentioned it; my heart was pounding as Dr. Scott talked about how it was a problem to find her height based on shadows and triangles.

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"I wonder if we'll make headlines?" Ami asked me jokingly one evening, as we were working on making another outfit. I furrowed my brow and cut a length of thread with my teeth.

"I'm not sure I want that. I mean, it would be pretty neat to be on the news, but then, like...the whole country might be after me."

Ami leaned over and gave me a shove. "The whole country practically IS after you, Garth! There's, like, millions of teenage girls probably thinking about you right now."

I "hmmm"-ed and "yeah"-ed and we went back to work. Minutes later, Ami's phone went off and she shrieked excitedly.

"Melanie Marie is trending! You have your own hashtag! And...BBC is doing a news story!!"

Chapter 4 by Magic for the Damned



That was how things went. The country lusted after me. Girls adored me. Even some of the guys at my school begun to covertly glance at pictures of Melanie Marie under their desks. Me and Ami were happy with how we were making the news, and how everyone was crazy over my alter ego.

They weren't supposed to find out, though. And they weren't anywhere close, despite the hundreds of hackers, stalkers, and P.I.s they sent to our little town. The hotels filled and the stores were full for a while. Our parents were even happy since money flowed into the shops that they owned.

Over time, the hype passed, and the rage to find Melanie passed. She disappeared from the news, and Ami and I moved on to doing other things. Everything was fine.

Until *they* came into town. Until *they* started handing out lots of money to find the real Melanie.

Until *they* made Ami betray me.

Chapter 5 by Scarlett

I never thought she would but she did

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Chapter 6 by SaintSayaka



Somehow, overnight, Ami became a multimillionaire, and I became the most hunted Ninstagrammer in America. Suddenly, I had become relevant again. I noticed when I first fled to the city, after I woke up and a teenager decked in a t-shirt of my face tried slashing my throat. Advertisements of me were everywhere. I knew they were photoshops - I had never done some of the poses being shown, nor did I even hear of half of the products I was supposedly the sponsor for (I shuddered when I saw my face plastered on some adult entertainment store). But nobody else could. Whoever was responsible for them had talent.

And now forced on the run, no phone, very little money, and no friends, I had nothing.

Chapter 7 by SaintSayaka



At least the alleyways of New York were blind to my predicament. I was free to lay in trash and garbage for as long as I pleased, undisturbed and at some sort of ironic peace. I thought of Ami, and how she was doing right about now. What she was spending her money on. Then I thought about my family, who by now, were probably worried sick about my disappearance, but had called off most police searches. I would not be found. And lastly, I thought of my Ninstagram account. How was it faring? Was it even still relevant?

"Yes," someone replied, squatting next to my place in the squalor. "It is, and I can show you."

Chapter 8 by R



It had become nigh second nature for me to spot PIs, those many months ago when I had still been Melanie. And I recognized the woman who squatted next to me in clothes that were clean but otherwise would have marked her as homeless as I was, now.

"You didn't realize you were speaking out loud, did you?" She says, smiling softly and standing up, staring down at where I lay askew on cardboard boxes. "Don't worry. Come with me and I'll give you some answers."

Not long ago, I wouldn't have followed some strange woman who knows where. Not long ago, I wouldn't have trusted a PI. Especially one who looks like her.

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"What do you want?" I ask.

"I was hired to find Melanie Marie." She replies. "And I need your help to do it."

"They found Melanie Marie already." I muttered angrily. "It was me. I did all the dress up and the world realized I was a boy and now I'm either their model or their demon. I just want it all to stop."

"Please." Reyes tells me, rolling her eyes and walking quickly down the streets of New York. Even dressed like she is, people part for her. I remember her back in what had used to be my hometown, the way she had an aura around her. "You know what I'm talking about."

"Excuse me?" I ask. What the heck is she talking about.

"Ami, Garth. I'm talking about Ami. You were the face, but she was the mastermind behind the account and you know it. She's still running the Ninstagram. Really playing up that tragic story of yours."

Reyes handed me her phone and I stared at the pictures of myself, smiling back, in make-up I had never worn and costumes I had never even seen. "How is she doing this?" I ask myself, staring at my smiling face with a prettily painted middle finger on the screen. The caption directs it towards my 'haters' but it feels like it's meant for me.

"She has a model that looks like you. Plastic surgery." Reyes explains. "Your friend Ami is getting some big bucks thanks to Ninstagram. You know, she's starting up a Voustube as well. She's got some serious cash flow coming in."

"Ami - Ami's still making money off of this?" I don't know what to even say. "I had to abandon my fucking house, leave my family, lose everything, and almost killed five times over and she's making money off of it!"

"Yeah." Reyes says with a shrug. "You know, I don't really need you to find her."

"I don't care." I reply stubbornly. "I'm going to find Ami. And I'm going to maker her pay."

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Luna

4 months ago

no there should have been a scene where he found her, and killed her

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